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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1. A composition comprising at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparin, said at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparin having a mean molecular weight in the range from 1500 to 3000 daltons; an anti-Xa activity in the range from 94 to 150 IU/mg; and an anti-Ila activity in the range up to 10 IU/mg; and and an anti-Xa activity:anti-Ila activity ratio greater than 10:1.
- 2. A composition comprising at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparinin which the alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparin has 2 to 26 saccharide units and has a 4,5-unsaturated glucuronic acid 2-O-sulphate unit at least one end.
- 3. A composition according to claim 1 in which the alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparin has 2 to 26 saccharide units and has a 4,5-unsaturated glucuronic acid 2-O-sulphate unit at at least one end.

- 4. A composition according to claim 2 having anti-Xa activity in the range of 125 to 150 IU/mg.
- 5. A composition according to claim 2 having a mean molecular weight in the range of 2000 to 3000 daltons.
- 6. A composition according to claim 2 having anti-Xa activity in the range of 140 to 150 IU/mg and a mean molecular weight in the range of 2000 to 3000 daltons.
- 7. A composition according to slaim 2, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt is a sodium, potassium, calcium or magnesium salt.
- 8. A composition according to claim 2, having an anti-Ila activity in the range of up to 5 IU/mg.
- 9. A composition according to claim 2, having an anti-Xa activity:anti-Ila activity ratio greater than 25.

10. The method of preparing at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparin comprising:

depolymerizing a quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin in an organic medium with a base with a pKa greater than 20;

converting the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of the depolymerized heparin to a sodium salt;

saponifying the ester; and optionally purifying the product.

- 11. The method according to claim 10, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has a mean molecular weight in the range of 1500 to 3000 daltons.
- 12. The method according to claim 10, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has an anti-Xa activity in the range of 94 to 150 IU/mg.

- 13. The method according to claim 10, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has an anti-IIa activity in the range of up to 10 IU/mg.
- 14. The method according to claim 10, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has an anti-Xa activity:anti-lla activity ratio greater than 10:1.
- 15. The method according to claim 10, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin comprises 2 to 26 saccharide units and has a 4,5-unsaturated glucuronic acid 2-O-sulphate unit at at least one end.
- 16. The method according to claim 10, in which the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin is a benzethonium, cetylpyridinium, or cetyltrimethylammonium salt.
- 17. The method according to claim 10, in which the base with a pKa greater than 20 is chosen from 1,5,7-triazabicyclo-[4.4.0]-dec-5-ene, 2-tert-

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butylimino-2-diethylamino-1,3-dimethylperhydro-1,3,2-diaza-phosphorine, a base of guanidine, and a base of phosphazene.

18. The method according to claim 17, in which the base of guanidine comprises:

$$R_5$$
 R_4
 R_3

where R_1 is hydrogen or alkyl, and where R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , and R_5 , which are identical or different, and each is a C_1 - C_6 alkyl.

- 19. The method according to claim 18, where R_1 is hydrogen, and R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , and R_5 are each methyl.
- 20. The method according to claim 17, in which the base of phosphazene comprises:

$$R_{1}$$
 R_{1}
 R_{1}
 R_{2}
 R_{1}
 R_{2}
 R_{3}
 R_{4}
 R_{5}
 R_{7}

where R_1 to R_7 are identical or different, and each is a C_1 - C_6 alkyl.

- 21. The method according to claim 10, in which the mol ratio of the base with a pKa greater than 20 to the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin ranges from 0.2:1 to 5:1.
- 22. The method according to claim 10, in which the degree of esterification of the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin ranges from 50 to 100%.
- 23. The method according to claim 10, in which the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of depolymerized heparin is converted to a sodium salt by treating the reaction medium with an alcoholic solution of sodium acetate.

- 24. The method according to claim 10, in which the saponification is carried out by an alkali metal hydroxide.
- 25. The method according to claim 10, in which the purification is carried out by hydrogen peroxide.
- 26. The method of preparing at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccaride of heparin comprising:

depolymerizing a quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin in an organic medium with sodium imidazolate;

converting the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of the depolymerized heparin to a sodium salt;

saponifying the ester; and optionally purifying the product.

27. The method according to slaim 26, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has a mean molecular weight in the range from 1500 to 3000 daltons.

- 28. The method according to claim 26, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has an anti-Xa activity in the range from 94 to 150 IU/mg.
- 29. The method according to claim 26, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has an anti-IIa activity in the range of up to 10 IU/mg.
- 30. The method according to claim 26, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin has an anti-Xa activity:anti-lla activity ratio greater than 10:1.
- 31. The method according to claim 26, in which the at least one alkali or alkaline-earth metal salt of at least one sulphated polysaccharide of heparin comprises 2 to 26 saccharide units and has a 4,5-unsaturated glucuronic acid 2-O-sulphate unit at at least one end.

- 32. The method according to claim 26, in which the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin is a benzethonium, cetylpyridinium, or cetyltrimethylammonium salt.
- 33. The method according to claim 26, in which the mol ratio of the sodium imidazolate to the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin ranges from 0.2:1 to 5:1.
- 34. The method according to slaim 26, in which the degree of esterification of the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of heparin ranges from 50 to 100%.
- 35. The method according to claim 26, in which the quaternary ammonium salt of the benzyl ester of depolymerized heparin is converted to a sodium salt by treating the reaction medium with an alcoholic solution of sodium acetate.
- 36. The method according to claim 26, in which the saponification is carried out by an alkali metal hydroxide.

- 37. The method according to claim 26, in which the purification is carried out by hydrogen peroxide.
- 38. A method of treating venous thrombosis in a patient in need of such treatment, comprising administering to the patient a composition as claimed in claim 2, in an amount efficacious for the treatment of venous thrombosis.
- 39. A method of treating venous thrombosis in a patient in need of such treatment, comprising administering to the patient a composition prepared according to the method as claimed in claim 10, in an amount efficacious for the treatment of venous-thrombosis.
- 40. A method of treating venous thrombosis in a patient in need of such treatment, comprising administering to the patient a composition prepared according to the method as claimed in claim 26, in an amount efficacious for the treatment of venous thrombosis.

- 41. A method of treating arterial thrombotic accidents in a patient in need of such treatment, comprising administering to the patient a composition as claimed in claim 2, in an amount efficacious for the treatment of arterial thrombotic accidents.
- 42. A method of treating arterial thrombotic accidents in a patient in need of such treatment, comprising administering to the patient a composition prepared according to the method as claimed in claim 10, in an amount efficacious for the treatment of arterial thrombotic accidents.
- 43. A method of treating arterial thrombotic accidents in a patient in need of such treatment, comprising administering to the patient a composition prepared according to the method as claimed in claim 26, in an amount efficacious for the treatment of arterial thrombotic accidents.
- 44. A method of treating a patient comprising the administration of a solution of a pharmaceutical composition by the subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous, or pulmonary route, in which a composition according to claim 2 is an active ingredient present in an amount efficacious for such treatment.

- 45. A method of treating a patient comprising the administration of a solution of a pharmaceutical composition by the subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous, or pulmonary route, in which a composition produced by the method according to claim 10 is an active ingredient present in an amount efficacious for such treatment.
- 46. A method of treating a patient comprising the administration of a solution of a pharmaceutical composition by the subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous, or pulmonary route, in which a composition produced by the method according to claim 26 is an active ingredient present in an amount efficacious for such treatment.